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ABSTRACT

A strategy for expanding business foreign language course offerings at the college level is described. At one institution this involves adding a business component to some sections of three language courses: second-semester intermediate level; third-year composition; and contemporary culture and civilization seminar. Content is concentrated in three areas: business vocabulary; internal structure of business in the foreign country; and intercultural negotiation in the target language. Examples are offered for French courses. The second-semester course incorporates business-oriented readings from French-language publications, a unit on exchange, commercial correspondence, and a lesson on billing errors. The composition course uses a business-oriented French text and assignments. The civilization seminar, which emphasizes oral communication, focuses on topics such as the European Community, social legislation, employment, unions, education and professional training, fiscal policies, and topics specific to certain economic groups. A business language course designed to complement these courses has three segments: vocabulary acquisition in speech and writing; business organization and documentation; and international negotiation. Brief course outlines and a bibliography are included. (MSE)

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Strategies for Expanding Undergraduate Course Offerings in Foreign Language for Business

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This presentation addresses a problem faced by many undergraduate foreign language departments: the difficulty of meeting the needs of students in foreign language for business within the confines of a single course. We would like to offer a strategy for expanding offerings in commercial foreign language through a series of modifications of traditional courses. (We have multiple sections of these courses with the exception of the seminar and have modified only one section.) By adding a business language component to each of the following courses: the second semester intermediate level, third year composition and contemporary culture and civilization seminar, we have been able to reduce the amount of material that must be covered in the business language course and concentrate it upon three areas: (1) business vocabulary, (2) internal structure of business in the foreign country and (3) negociation between American businesses and businesses in the target language country.We should like first to discuss the specific topics integrated into each of the traditional courses and give suggestions for methods of integration, for classroom activities and texts suitable for achieving this aim. Secondly, we should like to present the content of the foreign language for business course in connection with these modified courses. Since our program was developed for Business French, the specific texts suggested are French; however, the basic guidelines of the strategy are applicable to any foreign language for business program.

Our second semester intermediate French course is basically a grammar review course which continues the work of the first semester and treats the following topics: past tenses, relative pronouns, subjunctive, personal pronouns and if time allows, future and conditional tenses. The course also

contains some reading coupled with oral and written activities. We have substituted business related readings and activities for the traditional materials. Four units on business have been integrated into the course: (1) Business oriented readings from general publications. (Transparencies of examples from the Penguin French Reader) ; (2) Activities at the Exchange Office and at the Bank (Examples : Transparencies of Schaum Series for Communication, Perla); (3) Commercial correspondence (Transparencies from Oudot, Guide to Correspondence in French) ; (4) An error in billing (Transparencies from Perla).

The first unit introduces the students to some business vocabulary and requires them to make a short presentation responding to a question based on the reading. (Transparency of sample questions). This is a short unit requiring three class periods. Unit II is composed of a progressive series of exercises which enables the students to develop expertise in general banking activities. (Transparencies of examples) This unit culminates in role playing activities exchanging currencies, opening various types of accounts. (For a French class, the Valise des Affaires : CCIP is a valuable tool). This unit requires approximately six class periods. Unit III is composed entirely of written communication and begins with written requests for various banking services: opening an account, obtaining a credit card. Next, it deals with placing written orders and writing letters of complaint. (Transparencies of examples). This unit requires five class periods. The final unit, Unit IV, is composed of both oral and written activities in regard to paying bills: the bill itself, letters and telephone conversations dealing with errors in billing. (Transparencies: Oudot, Perla). Four class periods are necssary to complete this unit.

The four units introduce the student to business in the target language. The first unit is introductory to the topic of business; the three following units are intergrated such that Unit II and the first part of Unit III treat banking; Unit II has an oral orientation, Unit III a written one. Then the second part of Unit III and Unit IV address purchasing and paying for merchandise with Unit III concentrating on written communication and then Unit IV continuing written activities, but then returning to oral communcation. The four units require a minimum of eighteen class periods or two-fifths of a three credit hour one semester course. Their purpose is to familiarize the student with some very basic business operations and hopefully to provide a transition to the business language course . This course is the only one of the modified courses which is prerequisite to the foreign language for business course.

The composition course and the seminar may be taken before, concurrently or after the business language course. It is probably preferable for students to take the seminar after the other business oriented courses, since it is a 400 level course and assumes a greater competency in language than the 300 level. These two courses are still in the planning or theoretical stage in that we have just begun to implement this program this year. The modification of the composition course is very simply a re-direction of the focus of the compositions. The main text used for the course has been a basic grammar text such as L'Essentiel de la grammaire (Hoffmann). The subjects for biweekly composition have then been supplied by the instructor. In the modified section, we plan to use as the main text Civilisation et langue francaises Situations et Techniques commerciales (O. Girault et D. Nony) in conjunction with a reference grammar such as Précis de grammaire francaise (M. Grévisse). The Girault /Nony text contains

grammar exercises as well as exercises in business writing and should, therefore, fulfill the aspects of grammar study which are part of the course and as well re-focus the composition component to that of business writing. (Transparency : example from text). This course will remain a course in written communication .

The seminar by contrast is to be directed toward oral communication and is intended to treat the following areas: the European Community, social legislation, employment, unemployment, unions, educational institutions and professional preparation, problems specific to certain economic groups (agri-business, women in the work force, immigrants) , fiscal policies. This seminar will serve to enhance the knowledge gained by students in our two traditional civilization courses which concentrate upon history, politics, art, music and literature. The text for the course is La France d'aujourd'hui (N. Mauchamp). The course will contain many role playing activities as well as reading assignments and traditional tests on content. (Transparency : examples of activities).

With these courses in place, the foreign language for business course can then be organized into three segments (6, 6, 3). The first six weeks segment is devoted to vocabulary acquisition. This study is divided into two parts, the first of which focuses on vocabulary recognition, the second on active use of the vocabulary both in speaking and in writing. The texts used for this segment are Commerce et Marketing and Economie et Finance (Schmitt et Lutz, Schaum Series). These texts are easy for the students to understand; the exercises are repetitive with answers provided in the back. Economie et Finance (with some supplementation) (Transparency : example) is used for approximately three and one-half weeks. The students are then given a written test weighted toward passive recognition but containing some

question requiring active use of vocabulary. (Transparencies of test). For the next two and one-half weeks , Commerce et Marketing is used to review and re-inforce the vocabulary. This text repeats much of the vocabulary of the first text. The students are then tested again; the test is in two parts: (1) oral: student must explain without notes either Banking Orperations or Marketing Mix to the professor in a one to one situation , (2) written: the student is asked to write a one to two page paper on a topic such as the role of money or what is the economy. (Transparencies).

The second six week segment uses as a text Le Français commercial (Danilo, Challe, Morel) and concentrates primarily upon the "Documents". This text is supplemented by information found in the other texts listed on the handout. Much of the vocabulary has, at this point, already been mastered by the students, and they are ready to begin learning concepts and information. This segment is composed of four units as follows: (I) Vie d'une entreprise - etablishment, types (economic sector, legal form), and growth of a company, bankruptcy, internal organization. The material is tested with a written test. (Transparency) (II) Job Hunting, Interviewing- studies c.v., letter of application and interviewing techniques. The test for this unit is in two parts; students write c.v. and letters of application for specific positions (Les Annonces et Recrutement - Valise des Affaires CCIP) In pairs, the students then interview for the positions. However, the students do not know with whom they are paired . Therefore, the interviews have greater authenticity and enable the students to use the target language in a real situation. The interviews are done before the entire class. (III) The Product- Introducing, Marketing and Selling the Product - This unit is totally communicative.Using the information contained in the "Documents" of the applicable chapters , the students in groups perform the tasks necessary for

introducing a product at an international food fair. (IV) Methods of Payment - la lettre de change and le crédit documentaire. This is a short unit which treats these two methods of payment , one for domestic transactions, one for international transactions; the test for this unit is written. (Transparency).

The final three week segment of the course deals with international negociation and culminates with the students enacting a negociation between an American and a French company. French Business Culture ... A Video Course with its acompanying workbook is the used for this section. The final exam for the couse is comprehensive.

The underlying goal or directive that has guided the development of this program is to prepare the students for participation in a graduate program in international business.

Course Content and Outlines

FR 202 Intermediate French

I Four Grammar Units
- Past Tenses
- Relative Pronouns
- Subjunctive
- Personal Pronouns

II. Four Units of Business Language
- Readings on Business Topics
- Activities at the Bank and the Currency Exchange Office
- Commercial Correspondance: Banking Operations, Orders, Invoices
- An Error in Billing

FR 302 French Composition

I. Review of Grammar
- Special attention given to idiomatic expressions
- Avoiding anglicisms
- Style and structure

II. Business Correspondence
- Orders
- Letters
- Invoices
- Other Business Documents included in the Girault text.

French 404 Seminar in French Civilization: Commercial, Economic, Social Aspects

I. Readings and Lectures
- The European Community
- Social Legislation
- Employment/ Unemployment
- Educational Institutions and Professional Preparation
- Fiscal Policies
- Problems Specific to Certain Economic/ Social Groups
- American / French Cultural Differences

II. Comunicative Activities
- Presentations
- Debates
- Role Playing Activities

FR 338 French For Business

I. Business Vocabulary (6 weeks)
II. Business in France : Internal Structure, Business Practices(6 weeks)
- A. Companies
  - Establishment
  - Types (economic sector, legal forms)
  - Growth
  - Bankruptcy
  - Internal Organization
- B. Job Hunting
  - Curriculum Vitae
  - Letter of Application
  - Interview
- C. The Product
  - Conceptualizing the Product
  - Marketing
  - Publicity
  - Selling
  - International Trade Fair
- D. Methods of Payment
  - "Lettre de change"
  - "Crédit documentaire"

III. Negociation: French/ American (3 weeks)
- Viewing of Video: French Business Culture
- Written/ Oral Activities from the Cahier de Reference
- Mock Negociations

Bibliography

FR 202 Intermediate French

Lee, Simon and David Ricks. The New Penquin French Reader. New York: Penquin Books, USA. 1992. (Contains useful readings from magazines and newpapaers).

Oudot, Simone. Guide to Correspondence in French/ Guide de correspondance en francais. Lincolnwood, IL.: Passport Books, National Textbook Co., 1986. (Useful for commercial correspondence, examples of letters-banking operations, orders, complaints. Level comprehensible for intermediate students.) Also available in Spanish.

Perla, George. French for Business and Finance. Lexington, Massachusetts: D. C. Heath and Co., 1985. (Units on banking used in conjunction with Schaum texts; Billings error unit with Oudot text.)

Schmitt, Conrad J. Communicating in French. 3 vols. Novice/ Elementary, Intermediate, Advanced. New York: McGraw-Hill, Inc. Schaum Foreign Language Series, 1991-92. (The unit on banking from each level provides a good progression for the students.)
Also avaiable in Spanish.

FR 302 French Composition

Girault, O et D. Nony. Civilisation et langue françaises/ Situations et techniques commerciales. Paris: Foucher/ Hatier International, 1989.
(The text contains two indexes - one for grammar topices treated, one for professional terms which are useful in determining which lessons to use.)

Grevisse, Maurice. Précis de grammaire française. or similar reference grammar.

FR 404 Seminar in French Civilization: Commercial, Economic, Social Aspects

Carroll, Raymond. Evidences Invisibles: Américains et Français au quotidien. Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1987.

Mauchamp, Nelly. La France d'aujourd'hui - civilisation. Paris: CLE International, 1991.

Tiersky, Ronald. France in the New Europe. Belmont, California: Wadsworth Publishing, 1993.

FR 338 French for Business

Danilo, Michel, Odile Challe et Pierre Morel. Le Français commercial. Paris; Presses Pocket, 1988. (Used second six weeks)

Girod-Branan, Elisabeth. French Business Culture... A Video Course: Cahier de Référence Aiken, Soth Carolina: Edge Productions, Inc. and French Cultural Services, 1993. (Used last 3 weeks with video)

Schmitt, Conrad. J. et Katia Brillé Lutz. Commerce et Marketing: Lecture et Vocabulaire en français. New York: McGraw-Hill (Schaum Foreign Language Series) , 1992. (Avaiable in Spanish)

_____. Economie et Finance: Lectures et Vocabulaire en français. New York: McGraw-Hill (Schaum Froeign Language Series), 1993. (Available in Spanish)

Additional Texts Made Available to 300/400 Level Students

Boucher, François et José Echkenazi. Le Guide de l'Europe des 12. Paris; Editions Nathan, 1990. (Extensive information on the CEE and business in Europe.)

Danilo, Michel et Béatrice Tauzin. Le Français de l'entreprise. Paris: CLE International, 1990. (useful for job hunting, interviewing, charts on types of businesses, balance sheet, pay stub).

Genain, Laurence et Martin Lerond. Le C. V. gagnant. Paris: Editions de Vecchi S. A. , 1992. (In depth discussion of c.v.)

Griffin, Trenbolme J. and Russell Dagatt. The Global Negotiator. New York: Harper Business, 1990.

Guback, Denise. Français commercial: théorie et correspondance, New York: New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1984. (good explanations and illustrations of the "lettre de change".)

Lapeyre, Bénédicte et Pamela Sheppard. Négoicier en anglais comme en français? Negotiate in French as well as in English., éd. bilangue. Paris: Les Editions d'Organisatuion, 1991. (Basically a vocabulary aid.)

Mole, John. When in Rome .... A Business Guide to Cultures and Customs in 12 European Nations. New York: AMACOM, 1991. (Gives information on the Single market, each of the twelve countries, Americans in Europe.)

Nuq, Maya. La Lettre de candidature efficace. Paris: Editions de Vecchi, S. A. 1991. (Advice on how to write, errors to avoid, examples of letters with critiques.)

Oudot, Simone et David L. Robert. La France: Culture, Economie, Commerce: An Introduction to Business French. Prospest Hills, IL.: Wavland Press, 1984. (Good for types of businesses, how to calculate a profit, bankruptcy, distribution networks, concept of sectors, growth of business, bankruptcy.)

Willaims. Robert, Mark Teagan and Jose Beneyto. A Business Guide to Europe 1992. New York: AMACOM, 1991.

Brief Biographical Sketch

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PhD. Indiana University (18th century French Literature)
Attendance at Business French Workshops:
Purdue 1985
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Consultant Borg-Warner Ford Canada Warranty Exchange Program 1989/90
Interpreter/translator Montpelier, IN/ Montpellier, France Program
8 years experience Business management

Teaching Duties: Business French Program, French Civilization and Literature to 1789, European Culture through Film, language courses.

Publications:

Montpelier, Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow (co-editor)
Articles published and forthcoming on:
Adam de la Halle
Marie de France
Christine de Pisan
Alain René Lesage
Le Paysan parvenu: la vertu, l'honneur et le plaisir

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